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ABSTRACT

This document presents an interim report about tobacco use and its prevention among students in California schools. It focuses on the efforts of the Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program, a part of the California Department of Education's Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Education (DATE) program. It is noted that TUPE programs have operated in almost every elementary, middle, and senior high school in the state of California. Preliminary data from the second year of the TUPE/DATE program are presented which reveal that the TUPE effort has been effective in educating youth about the unhealthy aspects of smoking, in decreasing the number of young people who become regular smokers, and in ensuring that smoking is viewed as an unhealthy behavior. It is further noted that, by the time they finish high school, over one-half of California's students experiment with smoking, but fewer than 5% of the students in grades 7 through 12 actually become daily smokers, compared to a prevalence rate of 22% among the California adult population. The report examines youth and smoking; schools and their tobacco prevention education efforts; parents and tobacco prevention efforts; alternative activities to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; student exposure to curricula; student exposure to school-based tobacco services; and effects of the DATE program. (NB)

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ED 361 615

REPORT NO 2

CALIFORNIA PROGRAMS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO USE AMONG IN-SCHOOL YOUTH AN INTERIM REPORT ABOUT TOBACCO USE

Prepared for the California Department of Education
May 1993

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Prepared by The Southwest Regional Laboratory
for The California Department of Education
May 1995

This report is based on *Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Education Evaluation Second-year Interim Evaluation Report*, prepared by the DATE evaluation project staff Frank Romero, project director; Jerry Bailey, Joel Brown, Clifford Carr, John Flaherty, Treseen Fleming, Joni Gaynor, Denise Houle, Rita Karam, Melody Lark, Tamera Martino, and John Pollard

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CALIFORNIA PROGRAMS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO USE AMONG IN-SCHOOL YOUTH

An Interim Report About Tobacco Use

TOBACCO USE

California is serious about preventing and reducing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use among students attending its schools. In 1988 the voters of California passed Proposition 99. Subsequent legislation, Assembly Bills 75 and 99, created the Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program. This program is a part of the California Department of Education's (CDE's) Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Education (DATE) program. Today TUPE programs operate in almost every elementary, middle, and senior high school statewide. The Southwest Regional Laboratory (SWRL) is assessing this program's effectiveness under a contract from the CDE to evaluate the entire DATE program.

This briefing report is one of several being prepared for CDE, policymakers, and others interested in the DATE Evaluation. This report focuses on tobacco use and its prevention in California schools.

DATE programs in California are attempting to educate youth about the unhealthy aspects of smoking, including cigarette use, smokeless tobacco use, and second-hand smoke. The evaluation of these programs will take three years. Preliminary data from the second year, however, reveal that the TUPE effort is effective in educating youth about the unhealthy aspects of smoking, in decreasing the number of young people who become regular smokers, and in ensuring that smoking is viewed as an unhealthy behavior. Nevertheless, by the time they finish high school, over half of California's students experiment with smoking, but fewer than 5% of the students in grades 7-12 actually become daily smokers. This compares with a prevalence rate of 22% among the California adult population.

Youth and Smoking

Youth at all grade levels, but particularly at the younger grades, are strongly opposed to smoking. They know smoking is bad and they don't condone it among their friends. In other words, tobacco prevention efforts are having the desired effects. Nevertheless, youth are susceptible to peer pressure and are likely to experiment with smoking. The older they get, the greater the likelihood that they have had at least a puff on a cigarette. Approximately 5% of California's 7th-12th graders are daily smokers, but 16% have smoked at least one cigarette in the previous 30 days and an additional 22% have smoked at least one cigarette sometime in their life.

Tobacco is readily available to youth of all ages. The younger ones seem to get cigarettes from their parents' packs or from friends who got them from their homes. Vending machines appear to be the source for those youth unable to get cigarettes from home or too young or inexperienced to buy them over the counter. Older youth have no difficulty buying their cigarettes over the counter, particularly from small retail outlets.

- More than 90% of California's youth in grades 4-6 believe that smoking is bad for one's health and smells bad. Between 80-90% say smoking *does not* make "kids look cool." And 75% of students in this age group say none of their friends smoke.

- Most students, grades 4-6, have never smoked a cigarette. After 6th grade, the percentage of students who can make that claim goes down as the students progress through high school. The younger the student, the greater the resolve not to try cigarettes. At the 7th grade, 79% of the students say they will not use cigarettes in the next year. Every subsequent year fewer and fewer students voice that bold declaration. By grade 12, only 52% of the students still say they will not use cigarettes in the next year.

- Students experiment with, smoking, beginning in the middle grades and continuing through high school. At the 12th grade, 58% of the seniors have smoked at least once in their life. Preliminary data suggest that experimentation with tobacco is increasing, while daily use is decreasing. Much of this experimentation is related to adolescence. Influenced by peer pressure, simple curiosity, and role models in the home, television, movies, or advertising, such experimentation is hardly surprising.
- California youth know the consequences of smoking and using smokeless tobacco, believe it is unhealthy, and don't think it is cool. But many of them try it anyway.

- A hard-core group of students smokes regularly (daily or almost daily). This group represents less than 5% of California's students. In fact, the regular smokers constitute only 10% of those who have ever used tobacco.

- California students use less tobacco than other students nationwide. Comparison of California use rates to the National High School Senior Survey shows that overall California students use less tobacco. The total statewide effort to curb smoking among school-aged youth appears to be having an effect.

- Students who experiment with smoking in grades 4-6 generally don't buy their cigarettes. Rather, they appear to obtain cigarettes—either directly or indirectly—from smokers, many of whom reside within their homes. Younger students certainly appear to have access to cigarettes at home: 72% of students, grades 4-6, said at least one of their family members smokes. As the students grow older, and perhaps become more capable of buying their *own*

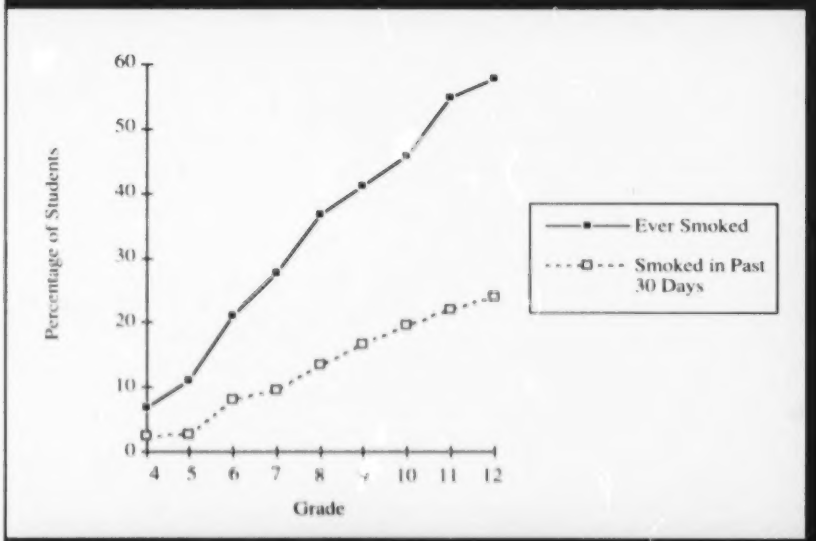
cigarettes, parents become less a source of tobacco. However, it could be that the home supply has been eliminated: 52% of students in grades 7-12 said no one in their family smokes.

- Younger students have more difficulty than older students obtaining cigarettes. Nevertheless, across all grade levels 65% of the students believe it is easy or very easy to obtain cigarettes.

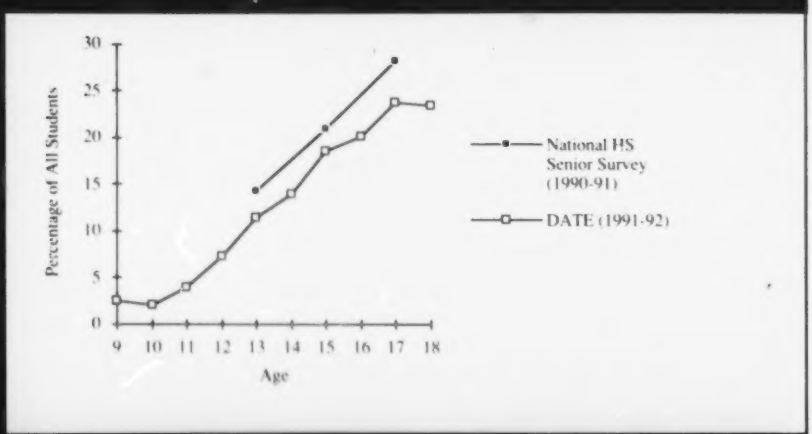
- The biggest supplier of tobacco to youth is other youth. Across all grade levels, "friends" are identified as the single most likely source of cigarettes or smokeless tobacco.

- Only about 3% of California youth, grades 8-12, rely on vending machines as a regular source of cigarettes. However, 12% of the 7th graders say they always or often get their cigarettes from vending machines. This suggests that for those youth too young to purchase tobacco over the counter, vending machines are an alternative source. Older students are more apt to purchase their cigarettes from small retail stores (e.g., neighborhood convenience stores) than from large retail stores (e.g., supermarkets, drug stores). High school seniors, however, are as likely to purchase from large stores as they are small ones.

Percentage of Students Who Ever Smoked or Smoked in Past 30 Days by Grade



Comparison of Current Cigarette Smoking by Age
(Any Smoking Within Past 30 Days)



Schools and Their Tobacco Prevention Education Efforts

Nearly every school district in California (97%) provides ATOD prevention education training for at least some of its staff. Tobacco prevention isn't generally treated as a separate training objective. Nevertheless, nearly a quarter of the time teachers spend in training is spent on issues specifically related to tobacco. Staff members who work most closely with students receive the greatest amount of in-service training. Other key findings include:

- In a typical California district, teachers and auxiliary personnel (e.g., nurses, counselors) receive 119 hours and 53 hours of ATOD prevention training, respectively. Teachers and auxiliary personnel receive 33 hours and 2 hours of tobacco use prevention training, respectively.

- The amount of time devoted to tobacco-specific training appears to be small. Districts tend to provide comprehensive ATOD prevention training. Consequently, skill-building approaches that apply equally to tobacco-specific and comprehensive ATOD prevention are reported as alcohol and other drug (AOD) training.

- Most of the tobacco in-service training relates to the use of class-

room curriculum. That is, 90% of California's school districts provide staff in-service training for curriculum; 83% provide training for "effects and consequences of ATOD use"; 67% for "early intervention model"; 64% for "dynamics of high-risk behavior"; and 61% for "service strategies" for youth and their families. Most of the training time seems to be devoted to curriculum because schools are experts in this area and it fits into the normal school structure and school day. The other in-service areas often require schools to make changes in the ways they work with students and teachers to view students' needs from new perspectives. For example, regarding high-risk behavior, teachers learn to view certain students' behaviors as correlates of underlying problems rather than reactions to specific situations.

• The typical district provides approximately 61 hours of curriculum training. Twenty-five percent of the districts provide less than 25 hours of training, while another 25% provide more than 127 hours of training. The number of staff in-service participants for curriculum is high, with typical attendance consisting of 94 individuals.

Percentage of Students Saying They "Always" or "Often" Get Their Cigarettes From These Specific Sources

Grade	7	8	9	10	11	12
Parents	14	11	5	5	9	4
Friends	33	28	35	41	40	32
Vending machines	12	3	3	3	3	4
Small retail stores	8	15	18	30	31	25
Large retail stores	9	8	9	20	14	24

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Parents and Tobacco Prevention Efforts

Nearly all California districts provide parent involvement activities related to ATOD prevention. Half the districts even provide training around tobacco-specific issues *to* parents. However, at least 25% of the districts provide no tobacco-specific training. The most common activity is teaching parents about the signs and symptoms of ATOD use. But only a relatively small number of parents participate in more intensive or ongoing activities such as support groups. Other key findings include:

- Parenting skills training (the bulk of which consists of teaching parents about ATOD signs and symptoms) is offered by 97% of California's school districts. About one fourth of the districts had 10 or fewer participants in their training and an equal number of districts reached more than 300 parents. Studies have shown that several reasons explain why parents, particularly those of high-risk youth, do not participate in school activities and trainings. The primary reasons seem to be lack of child care, convenience of the time the training is offered, and the general messages that parents receive that they are really not welcome at the school.

- In addition to training parents, more than half of the school districts sponsor parent support groups. However, the typical amount of time provided is just 6 hours. A quarter of the districts provide no parent support activities and a quarter provide more than 37 hours.

- Overall, parent involvement activities focused only on tobacco are rare. And time spent in parenting skills greatly overshadows time spent in any other parent involvement activities. Generally speaking, activities of limited duration tend to involve the greatest number of parents. By the same token, more intensive activities draw the smallest crowds.

- A majority of districts alert parents about the availability of services by sending flyers home with students. Although this method of communication is inexpensive, it has serious limitations (e.g., younger youth lose the flyers, older youth throw them away). Districts do appear willing to invest in personal telephone calls to parents when their youth are identified as being high risk.

Alternative Activities to ATOD Use

Districts implement a wide variety of activities viewed as positive alternatives to ATOD use. The vast majority of districts, for example, provide social events for large numbers of students where tobacco isn't allowed.

- Common tobacco-free social events reported by districts were Club Live, dances, DARE graduation, Friday Night Live, Red Ribbon Week, Teen Theater performances, and Youth-to-Youth conferences. Such events occur throughout the year and involve large proportions of students.

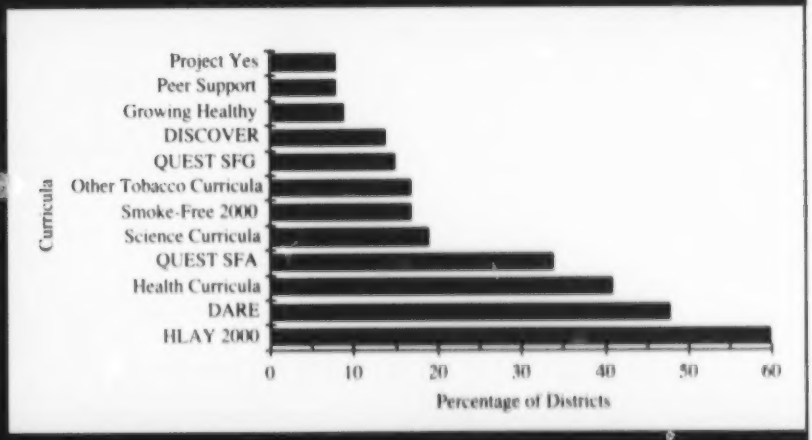
- Approximately four out of five districts also provide other positive alternatives such as sports leagues and special interest clubs. Other activities reported include Clean Kids, Esteem Team, and Just Say No. Peer programs (e.g., peer helpers, peer counseling, peer leadership) and Club Live are the most frequently reported special interest clubs. These activities tend to involve a relatively small number of students on a regular or ongoing basis.

Student Exposure to Curricula

Comprehensive substance abuse prevention education curricula are a critical component of the DATE program. Schools have many commercially available prevention curricula, as well as district-developed curricula, to choose from. Three types of curricula are being implemented in virtually all grades: health, science, and tobacco-specific curricula. Generally speaking, the younger the students, the more exposure they receive to tobacco-specific curricula. High school students receive almost no exposure to prevention curricula.

- Smoke-Free 2000 is one of the most common tobacco-specific curricula used. A wide variety of prevention curricula is used both within and across school districts. Twelve curricula emerge as the most popular in the state, led by Here's Looking at You 2000. Other popular choices are DARE, Health Curricula, and QUEST Skills for Adolescence. Here's Looking at You 2000 is the most commonly used curriculum in nearly every grade. The DARE curriculum is most commonly used to provide instruction to 5th and 6th graders (the curriculum's primary audience).

Percentage of Districts Using the 12 Most Common Curricula



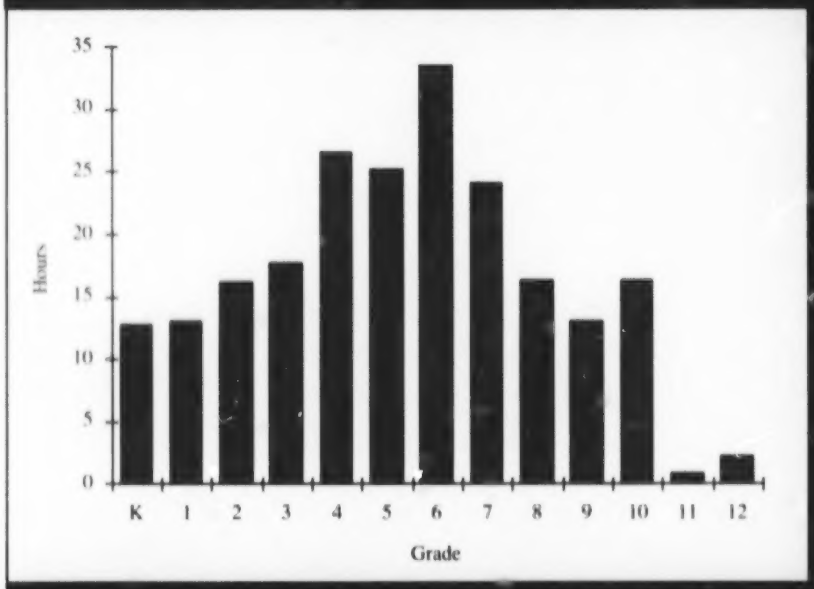
• Smoke-Free 2000 is concentrated at the 4th grade. Although the amount of curriculum delivered is low (typically only five hours), nearly all fourth graders receive it. Other curricula on the "most popular" list also are grade specific, e.g., QUEST Skills for Growing and QUEST Skills for Adolescence are appropriately implemented for grades K-5 and 6-8, respectively.

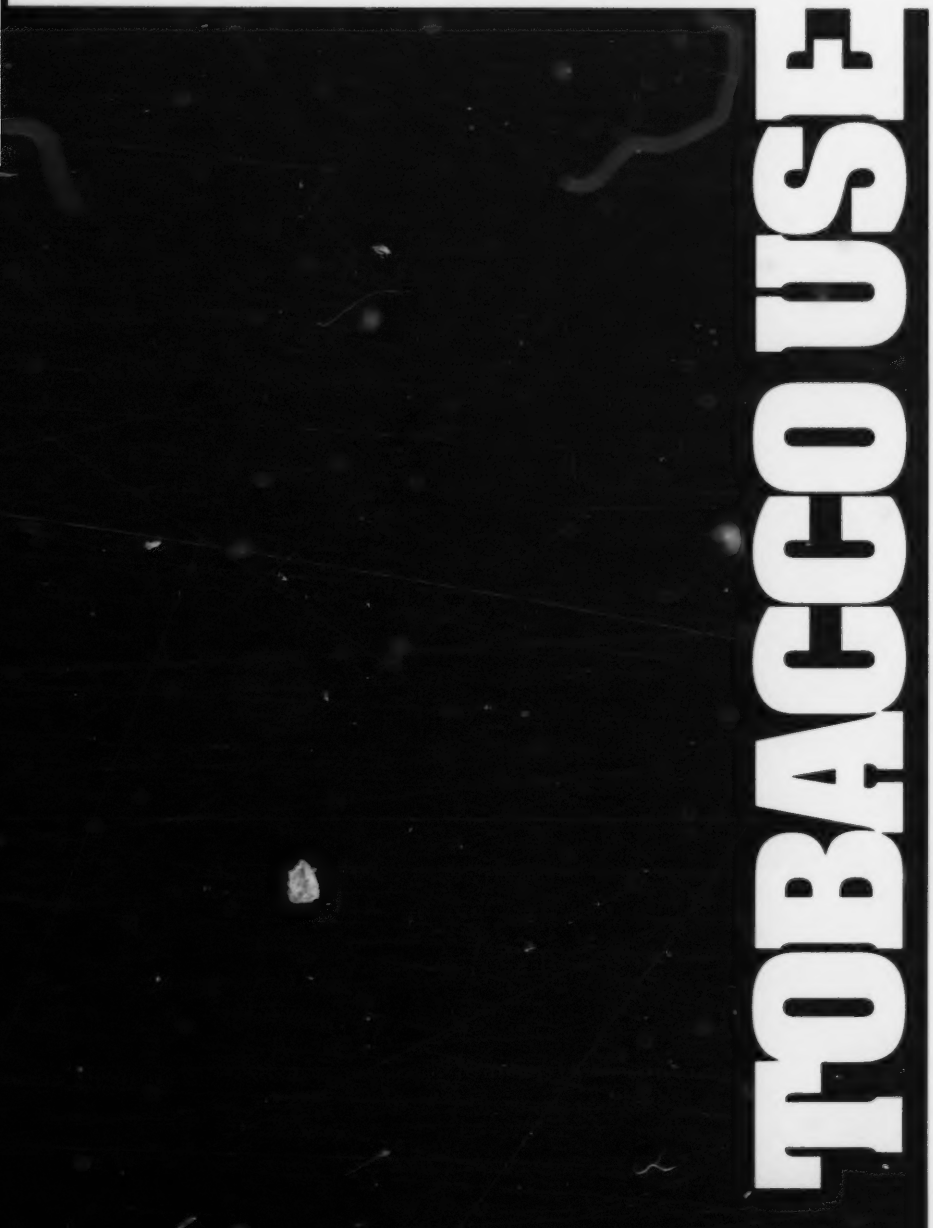
• Overall, QUEST Skills for Growing and QUEST Skills for Adolescence appear to be well-implemented relative to the number of hours that each curriculum is delivered. QUEST Skills for Growing, however, reaches a greater proportion of students. This seems to be related to the fact that teachers are generally instructed that all lessons must be implemented to achieve the potential program results.

• For all grades combined, more hours of prevention curricula are delivered in health than in science or tobacco-specific curricula. Exposure to science and tobacco-specific curricula varies, but the general trend is that students in the higher grades receive less hours of curricula than do students in lower grades.

• Overall, schools put the greatest emphasis on prevention curricula prior to the students' move into junior high school or middle school. For that reason, 4th-7th graders receive 25 or more hours of classroom instruction in prevention curricula. Sixth graders receive the greatest number of hours, typically 32 hours per student; by the end of the 6th grade, nearly every California school district says 90-100% of its students are receiving prevention instruction. By the time students are juniors and seniors, schools don't spend much time trying to educate them about the risks of smoking. With experimentation increasing across grade and age levels, a need to continue exposure to prevention education curricula throughout the K-12 school career of every student exists.

Median Average Number of Hours of Prevention Curricula Per Student by Grade Level





Student Exposure to School-based Tobacco Services

The tobacco-related events and services made available to students follow the pattern of exposure to curricula. That is, tobacco-related service events such as having a class speaker, experiencing a lesson or seeing a film, or having a special-recognition day or week occur generally at the lower grades. However, given the consistent increase in tobacco use in senior high school, services to older students needs to be increased.

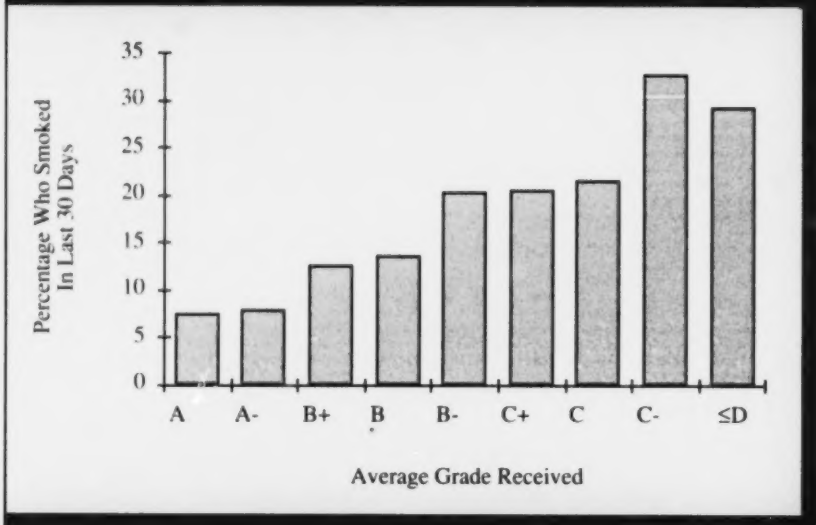
- Through the 6th grade, nearly 100% of California's students are exposed to school-based tobacco services. The most frequent kinds of services include class speakers, class lesson or film, or a special recognition day or week (e.g., the Great American Smoke-Out).

- The exposure to tobacco services begins to drop in middle or junior high school and nearly disappears in the 11th and 12th grades.

Effects of DATE Program

Without question, the DATE program is having the desired effect with youth in grades 4-6. They clearly acknowledge that they are learning about smoking and how it is bad for their health, how to say no to cigarettes or smokeless tobacco, and how to talk to their parents. The program's effect on older students is less positive. No single positive effect is identified by a majority of the students in grades 7-12. And two sought-after effects--learning how to talk to parents and learning how to seek treatment—are hardly mentioned by any of them. Interestingly, there does appear to be a relationship between students' abstention and their exposure to tobacco-related services. That is, the number of DATE service events provided to the older students seems to be positively correlated with desirable changes in the students' attitudes and behavior. This latter finding will be investigated further in Year 3 of SWRL's evaluation. Secondary schools would be well-advised to greatly increase tobacco-related services for the older students.

Percentage Who Smoked in the Last 30 Days by Average Grade Received



• Over 85% of the elementary-age students report that they know that smoking is bad for health and about 80% say they know how to say no to cigarettes. Over 85% also say they know how to talk to their parents about smoking. Only about 10% of

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the youth in grades 4-6 say they are receiving no positive benefits from the DATE program.

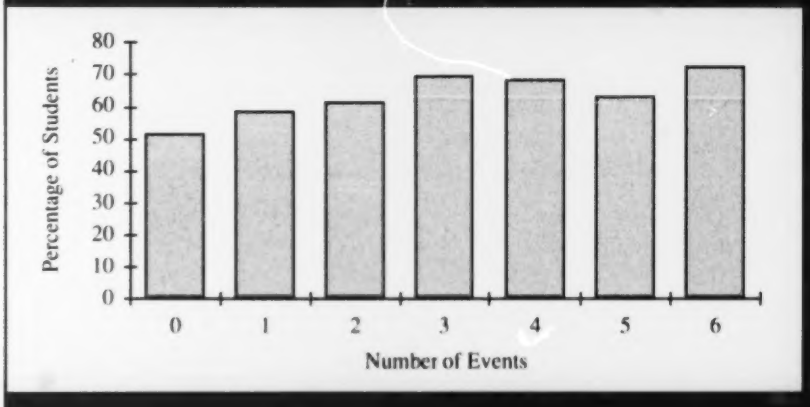
- Students in grades 7-12 are much less likely to cite benefits from the DATE effort. As students move through school, they claim they learn less and less about how to avoid/ reduce smoking and how to resist pressure to use. Interestingly, as the students age they acknowledge their growing awareness of the health risks associated with smoking.

- Students in grades 7-12 say they are not aware of services (e.g., counseling, cessation classes) for quitting tobacco use and that they know next to nothing about how to seek treatment for tobacco use or how to talk to their parents about tobacco use.

- Students who do well in school tend to smoke less. Better ways of reaching these youth who are not performing well in school need to be developed. It is possible that poor performance in school contributes to tobacco use.

- The number of DATE services provided to youth and their positive changes in use, attitudes, and knowledge is positively correlated. However, it is too early in the study to link these positive findings solely to the DATE program. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that these findings exist.

Percentage Not Smoking Last 30 Days by Number of Events in Grades 7 - 12



Additional Information Available

This summary is one of several briefing documents being prepared for policymakers, program developers, and others interested in the DATE Evaluation. Three of the other interim reports will feature: (a) an executive summary of the second-year evaluation; (b) an interim report about alcohol and other drug use; and (c) an interim report about school ATOD policies. A full discussion of the issues contained in these briefing documents is contained in the report, ***Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Education Evaluation: Second-year Interim Evaluation Report***, produced by the Southwest Regional Laboratory for the California Department of Education. Copies are available (for $22.50 prepaid) by contacting Frank Romero, program director, SWRL, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, CA, 90720.

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